



RESOURCES FOR DESIGNERS: FOCUS AREAS

The following content was generated to inform designers on areas of focus for innovation and solutions related to mobility.

THEME 1: STAYING ACTIVE

COMMON PROBLEMS

1. Availability and Access
 - Availability and access to equipment is limited.
 - Availability and access to community is limited.
2. Adjusting to new activities
 - Many seniors don't know how to adjust.
 - Finding appropriate resources can be difficult.
3. Fear
 - Fear of falling is a major concern for many seniors.
 - Fear of not doing it “right” often inhibits seniors from “action.”
4. Lack of Comfort
 - Exercise equipment is often uncomfortable and doesn't fit properly.
5. Affordability
 - Design for extreme affordability.

ANECDOTES, IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS

- “The world is my gym.”
- “Walking” the errands.
- “Maintain the pleasure of movement.”
- “Back to basics thinking is required.”
- Improve hiking poles / canes with lights and sound.
- Create better personal locator devices.
- Utilize aerobic peddle exerciser / stationary bike.
- Create methods for seniors to feel needed.
- Raise garden beds.
- Utilize and develop free public exercise resources.
- Incorporate music into activities.
- Utilize existing exercise programming on TV an online.
- Feelings of pride and having results to show is a desired outcome.



THEME 2: COMMUNITY

COMMON PROBLEMS

1. Community is where I am (at that moment) and who I run into.
2. Seniors need to continue to cultivate their network as they age
 - La Comida was referred to as an excellent example.
3. There is a lack of education / awareness for seniors regarding what community resources are already out there.
4. There is a “need to connect the dots” through intergenerational programs.
5. “It’s a 2-way street” that is multi-transactional where seniors are placed in a position to both give and ask for help.

THEME 3: HOME

COMMON PROBLEMS

1. Psychological (emotional) and physical welfare are equally important.
2. “Just one Misstep” is all it takes.
 - Flooring texture has a huge impact on mobility.
 - ½ of an inch change in flooring surfaces can be difficult to navigate (especially if you are medicated).
3. Not all falls require emergency services (three ambulances and a fire truck).
 - “It wasn’t an emergency, but she needed help to get back up.”
 - “I myself couldn’t pick her up anymore. She was a very weight.”
4. “Getting to the bathroom in the middle of the night from the bed” can be a difficult task.
 - Poor lighting and an impacted sense of balance are often problems.
 - Not “feeling” the floor can be a serious problem.
5. Seniors often have a strong fear of being a disabled person.
 - “He doesn’t want people to see him walking with a cane.”

ANECDOTES, IDEAS, SOLUTIONS & RESOURCES

- “I haven’t seen the moon and stars for years because I’m looking at my toes.”
- “It felt like someone just came behind me and pushed me down.”
- My mother has a fear of falling so she just doesn’t move at all.”

NEXT STEPS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. Invite feedback from seniors from lower economic backgrounds.
2. Look at homebound and other seniors that are the least visible in society and therefore the least likely to participate in the design challenge.
3. Disguise yourself as a senior (or let your grey grow in) and see for yourself how seniors are perceived in the world.
4. Consider doing a design challenge that includes seniors as members of the design team.

